(2) Revised National TB Control Project Phase - II (RNTCP -ii) for US $ 170 million, and

(3) Karnataka Health Systems Development & Reform Project for US $ 142 million,

as the Department of Institutional Integrity (INT) of the World Bank has concluded on the basis of its investigations that in the World Bank assisted Reproductive & Child Health Project - I project (US $ 235 million and closed on 30/09/04), there were some irregularities in the procurement process.

(c) to (f) Yes sir. The responsibility for the implementation of the projects (53 involving US $ 11.9 billiion of World Bank support), including award and administration of various contracts, rests with the project authorities, which includes the Line Ministries, State Governments and Public Sector Undertakings. The World Bank's policy requires that the project authorities as well as the bidders, suppliers and contractors under Bank-financed contracts to observe the Bank guidelines and procedures during execution of such contracts. Accordingly, the State Governments and Central Ministries/Departments have been requested that these guidelines of the Bank may be reiterated to the project authorities so that there is no deviation from the established procedures of the Bank.

(g) For continuous World Bank support in the Health Sector, the Government of India and the World Bank are currently engaged in a dialogue to agree on an action plan in addition to the existing guidelines that will strengthen the procurement systems in the Health Sector in India and bring greater transparency.

Loan Provided to Medium and Small Farmers

†3996. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of percentage of bank loans provided to medium and small farmers and to the poor during the last three years;

(b) the details of non-payment during the last three years and the amount remained with Government as bad debt;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) the timely repaid loan amount out of the loan amount of more than 10 lakh alongwith the details of the loan amount gone as bad debt;

(d) whether Government are making special effort for early realization of the disbursed loans and the results thereof; and

(e) the steps Government have taken to see to it that the poor get loans early without any difficulty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House to the extent available.

Imposition of service tax

3997. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the rationable behind imposition of service tax and be whom it is intended to be borne;

(b) what is the reason for keeping single rate of service tax for all types of services, if goods can be taxed at different rates under VAT; and

(c) whether the services provided by organized sector like telecom, banking, railways/transport where the availers of services have no option, can be fixed at low/nominal rates and the 12 per cent slab be applied only on services availed by the elite and well off?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) Service tax was introduced in 1994 so as to broaden the tax base, to bring about neutrality in consumption choices and on grounds of equity. Service tax is intended to be passed on to consumers of taxable services;

(b) Uniform rate is neutral in its impact on production and conumption decisions and obviates disputes of classification of services.

(c) There is no proposal at present under the consideration of the Central Government to prescribe a lower rate of service tax for any specified services.